

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A gas remover to control an environment in ~~for expelling gases from~~ a load tap changer ~~having an ullage~~, the gas remover comprising:

a source of substantially nonreactive gas at a pressure greater than ambient atmospheric pressure;

a feed line configured to introduce the nonreactive gas into an ullage in the load tap changer;

a sight glass on the load tap changer to permit examination of the inside of the load tap changer, wherein the load tap changer contains mineral oil; and

an orifice configured to establish ~~an~~ a substantially continuous outflow rate of nonreactive gas ~~and to expel~~ entrained vapor phase contaminants ~~if present from the ullage in the load tap changer-ullage~~ to the atmosphere.

2. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises a nitrogen generator configured to extract nitrogen from the atmosphere for use as the substantially nonreactive gas.

3. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises an inlet air filtration system to filter air entering said nitrogen generator.

4. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises an air compressor to furnish compressed air to said nitrogen generator.

5. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises a gas separating membrane within said nitrogen generator, wherein said separating membrane is capable of removing gases including at least one of ozone, carbon compounds, sulfur dioxide, and hydrogen sulfide from the outflow stream from said nitrogen generator to limit each contaminant to a maximum of 1 part per million of the mass of the outflow gas.

6. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises a gas separating membrane within said nitrogen generator, wherein said separating membrane is capable of removing gases including at least one of oxygen and water vapor from the outflow stream from said nitrogen generator to limit each contaminant to a levels specified by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) for Type I insulating gas.

7. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises a storage reservoir within said nitrogen generator configured to store nitrogen during an operational period for said nitrogen generator.

8. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises a pressure regulator in the feed line from said nitrogen generator to the load tap changer ullage to lower the nitrogen pressure from a first pressure level at which the nitrogen is generated and stored to a second pressure level at which it is introduced into the load tap changer ullage.

9. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises a gas flow path that establishes an effective output venting rate from the load tap changer ullage to a standard atmosphere.

10. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the venting rate is dependent on total gas pressure within the ullage.

11. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises a gas flow path establishing an output venting rate from the load tap changer ullage to the atmosphere surrounding the load tap changer of approximately 2 cubic feet of nitrogen per day.

12. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises an alternative pressure regulation facility in the feed line from said nitrogen generator to the load tap changer ullage, which alternative pressure regulation facility provides an increased flow rate from the nitrogen section to the load tap changer ullage during a venting cycle.

13. (Original) The gas remover of claim 2, wherein the gas remover further comprises an alternative pressure regulation facility in the feed line from said nitrogen generator to the load tap changer ullage, which alternative pressure regulation facility provides an increased flow rate from the load tap changer ullage to the atmosphere during a venting cycle.

14. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises a control mechanism to permit manual selection of said alternative pressure regulation facility.

15. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises an automatic control mechanism to permit pressure-regulated engagement of said alternative pressure regulation facility.

16. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises a check valve between said orifice and the atmosphere.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Original) The gas remover of claim 1, wherein the gas remover further comprises a fill gas other than nitrogen.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A gas remover to control an environment in ~~for expelling gases from~~ a load tap changer, comprising:

means for extracting nitrogen gas from the atmosphere;

means for urging said extracted nitrogen gas into an ullage in ~~[[a]]~~ the load tap changer;

means for monitoring the condition inside the load tap changer, wherein the load tap changer contains mineral oil; and

means for expelling vapor phase contaminants from the ullage in the load tap changer by establishing a substantially continuous outflow of nitrogen ~~from the ullage to the atmosphere along with entrained vapor phase contaminants, if present.~~

21. (Original) The gas remover of claim 20, further comprising:

means for filtering atmospheric air introduced into said nitrogen generator; and

means for compressing atmospheric air introduced into said nitrogen generator to a pressure level sufficient to extract nitrogen therefrom.

22. (Original) The gas remover of claim 20, further comprising means for separating gaseous nitrogen from the compressed atmospheric air introduced into said nitrogen generator.

23. (Original) The gas remover of claim 20, further comprising:
means for applying power to said compressing means;
means for controlling application of power to said compressing means; and
means for establishing pressure thresholds at which power directed to said compressing means may be applied and removed.

24. (Currently Amended) A process for ~~expelling gases from~~ controlling an environment in a load tap changer, comprising the steps of:

extracting nitrogen gas from the atmosphere;
urging the extracted nitrogen gas into an ullage in ~~[[a]]~~ the load tap changer;
monitoring the condition inside the load tap changer, wherein the load tap changer contains mineral oil; and
expelling vapor phase contaminants from the ullage in the load tap changer by
establishing a substantially continuous outflow of nitrogen ~~from the ullage to the atmosphere~~
~~along with entrained vapor phase contaminants, if present.~~

25. (Original) The gas removal process of claim 24, further comprising the steps of:
filtering atmospheric air in advance of extracting nitrogen therefrom; and
compressing atmospheric air to a pressure level sufficient to extract nitrogen therefrom.

26. (Original) The gas removal process of claim 24, further comprising the step of separating gaseous nitrogen from the compressed atmospheric air.